

BATON ROUGE POLICE DEPARTMENT

General Order No.135.1

Effective Date
05-04-2005

Revised Date
09-18-2020

Subject: TASER

Reviewed 9-9-20

POLICY

The Advanced Taser is deployed as an additional police tool and is not intended to replace firearms or self-defense techniques. The Advanced Taser may be used to control a dangerous or violent subject when deadly physical force does not appear to be justified and/or necessary, or attempts to subdue the subject by other conventional tactics have been, or will likely be, ineffective in the situation at hand; or there is reasonable expectation that it will be unsafe for officers to approach within contact range of the subject.

PROCEDURES

I. TRAINING

- A. Only employees who have been trained as TASER operators or instructors are to deploy the TASER.
- B. Employees trained in the use of the TASER will be re-certified each year as part of in-service training by a certified Taser instructor. Only employees who have current certification may continue to use or carry TASERS.

II. DEPLOYMENT

- A. The decision to use the TASER is based on the same criteria an employee uses when selecting to deploy any less-lethal force option. The decision must be made dependant on the actions of the offender(s) or threat (human or animal) facing the employee(s), and the totality of the circumstances surrounding the incident.
- B. The TASER is not meant to replace deadly force. The TASER should not be used in situations when there is a substantial threat to the employee(s) or others, unless there is a second employee present who is prepared to use deadly force.
- C. Proper consideration and care should be taken when using the TASER on offenders in elevated positions or other circumstances where a fall may cause substantial injury or death. The face and head are not to be targeted except under extreme exigent circumstances.
- D. Whenever possible, a warning shall be given to the offender prior to deployment of the TASER unless such a warning would increase risk of greater injury to the offender, employees, or others. An announcement will be shouted stating "TASER, TASER" in order to notify other employees that a TASER deployment will occur.
- E. A deployed TASER is not to be left unattended. The deploying employee will retain control of the weapon, unless relieved by another certified employee. This should not prevent an employee from receiving medical care or aiding others.

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F. TASERs should not be deployed under certain circumstances.

1. The TASER has the ability to ignite flammable liquids and gasses. It will not be deployed in circumstances or environments where flammables are obviously present.
2. The TASER will never be used punitively or for purposes of coercion.
3. Any undocumented activations of the TASER will be handled in accordance with GO 112. Disciplinary action will be taken against employees using the TASER inappropriately.

G. Limit Taser exposures to 15 seconds of 3 (5 second) cycles unless exigent circumstances exist.

III. POST DEPLOYMENT CARE

- A. Immediate action should be taken to protect and secure the offender and to protect the scene. Once the offender has complied or has been restrained the TASER will be turned off.
- B. Contact a supervisor and have them respond to the scene. Supervisors are responsible for notifying their chain of command of the deployment.
- C. The employee may remove the probes, except when probes are located in sensitive areas. Probes embedded in sensitive areas will be removed by appropriate medical personnel. Secondary injuries resulting from the subject being Tased may require medical assistance from EMS.
- D. To transport offenders with embedded probes, the conductive wires may be cut approximately 6 inches from any probes still embedded in the person. Probes may be left attached if the need for further control is anticipated.
- E. All probes are to be considered a biohazard.
 1. When recovered from an offender the probes are to be placed needle first into the cartridge they came from and secured with tape.
 2. The cartridge will then be placed into evidence, packaged as a biohazard.
- F. Do not transport offenders face down who have received any application of the TASER. Employees are to document notification to PPB personnel and jail personnel that the subject received an application of the TASER.
- G. Criminal offenders will be transported to First District and placed on the Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS). Except for misdemeanor juvenile offenders. Further disposition will be determined by criminal charges. Employees will make every reasonable effort to positively identify those subjects taken into protective custody and admitted into a medical facility.

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IV. POST DEPLOYMENT DOCUMENTATION

A. Supervisor Responsibilities

1. Respond to the scene of a TASER deployment.
2. Assure the offender receives medical treatment, if needed.
3. Assure that the offender has been properly restrained and the probe wires cut if not needed for control purposes.
4. Assure that the offender has had prompt removal of the probes from his person or transported to the hospital if necessary.
5. Assure the use of force form (with body locations depicted on sketch) is properly completed and filed.
6. Notify chain of command (District Commander, Uniform Patrol Commander).

B. Reporting

1. Each use of the TASER is to be documented. This includes probe deployment and touch stun application.
2. The use of the TASER will be reported with the standard Response to Resistive Behavior report.
3. Assure that the offender is interviewed for extent of the effects of the TASER deployment, if possible. The puncture wounds of the offender shall be photographed and photos placed in evidence or documented with the officers body camera.
4. The Training Academy will periodically remove data information from the TASER and replace the used cartridge, but this will not require the Training Academy to be present at the scene of a TASER deployment. The data will be documented in the case of a deployment by the Training Academy, in a memorandum to the bureau commander of the deploying employee and to Internal Affairs.
5. TASER weapon data records will be reviewed annually as part of the in-service training to detect and deter misuse of the weapons.
6. Tasers will be downloaded within 72 hours or next scheduled working day when the Training Academy is available after each usage (not spark test), as well as quarterly for software updates.

V. EQUIPMENT CARE AND MAINTENANCE

A. Only TASERs and TASER cartridges issued by the Baton Rouge Police will be used by Baton Rouge Police employees.

1. Employees issued TASERs will regard them as firearms and secure them in the same manner as a firearm at all times.
2. Employees issued TASERs are responsible for the weapon and all cartridges issued to them.

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- B. The TASER and TASER cartridges will be kept in the issued holster except when prepared for use. The Training Academy must approve other methods of carry.
- C. Employees issued TASERs are responsible for maintaining operational batteries in the unit issued to them. Batteries will be available at the Training Academy. Only approved batteries are to be used in the TASER.
- D. Each employee issued a TASER will be provided a form (log) to record the TASER serial number and a record of all activations including spark tests, drive stun and/or deployment. Training Academy will keep the cartridge serial numbers on file.
 - 1. Supervisors will sign the TASER log.
 - 2. The list will be maintained as each cartridge is used.
 - 3. Replacement cartridges are available at the Training Academy.